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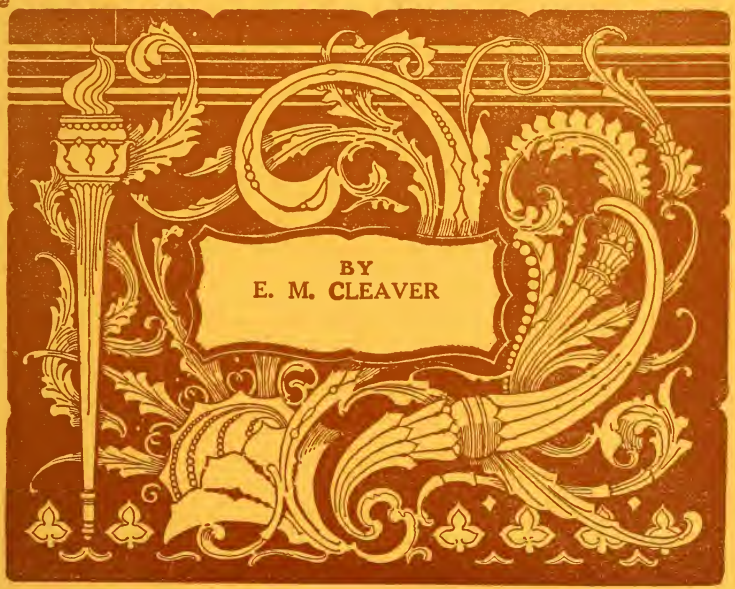
A New Entertainment

The Universal Exchange



CHICAGO
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By W. D. EMERSON

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Here is a **practical** hand-book, describing in detail all the accessories, properties, scenes and apparatus necessary for an amateur production. In addition to the descriptions in words, everything is clearly shown in the numerous pictures, more than one hundred being inserted in the book. No such useful book has ever been offered to the amateur players of any country.

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Chapter I. **Introductory Remarks.**

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Chapter III. **Arrangement of Scenery.** How to hang it. Drapery, tormentors, wings, borders, drops.

Chapter IV. **Box Scenes.** Center door pieces, plain wings, door wings, return pieces, etc.

Chapter V. **How to Light the Stage.** Oil, gas and electric light. Footlights, Sidelights, Reflectors. How to darken the stage, etc.

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Chapter IX. To the Stage Manager.

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CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

The Universal Exchange

AN ENTERTAINMENT

By
E. M. CLEAVER

CHICAGO
THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

CHARACTERS.

P5635
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MRS. EVA EXCHANGE, Large; mannish costume.
MISS CARRIE OSSITEE, Small; street costume.
MR. VIE VACIOUS, Very small; loud costume.
MR. SHIWIFE, Black clothes and tie; very shabby.
MAG, "FLOWER OF NATURE," Little girl; very shabby.
BRO. MARRIEM, Clergyman; sleek and fat.
BOBBY BABITRAD, Boy's ordinary costume.
MISS BESSIE RINGE, Street costume.
MRS. TYRED MANN, Shabby and slovenly.
MISS P. R. T. ST. TICKETT, Loud; chews gum; street costume.
MRS. MARY WIDDO, Stylish costume.
BEATRICE BEULAH BECKY BARBARA BELINDA BUCKINGHAM, Child; nicely dressed; white apron.
MR. COLLAIRE, Starched shirt; necktie; black trousers, no coat, vest or collar.
MRS. BABITRAD, Fat woman, with wrapper.

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PROPERTIES.

A pair of pumps. Two large collars. A hatchet. A picture with a broken frame. A sofa-cushion. Two taffy on sticks. A bird cage. A post card album. A mirror. A jig-saw puzzle, and "Hubby," etc.

Six large signs:

1—THE UNIVERSAL EXCHANGE.
2—EVERYTHING AND ANYTHING EXCHANGED
FOR
ANYTHING AND EVERYTHING ELSE.
3—EXCHANGES MADE WHILE YOU WAIT.
4—PETTY PREMIUM OF PALTRY 23 CENTS.
5—OWING TO THE SMALL RATE OF PREMIUM NO GUARANTEE WILL BE GIVEN.
6—PAY YOUR PREMIUM
AND
PICK YOUR PURCHASE.

Plays about fifty minutes.

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TMP92-008852

THE UNIVERSAL EXCHANGE.

SCENE: *A store, with a counter at back; a telephone on counter. Row of hooks at left side; at right, a low shelf, a bench, and stool back of counter.* MRS. EVA EXCHANGE *at rise of curtain is busily arranging the stock as* CARRIE OSSITEE *enters.*

MRS. EVA EXCHANGE. Why, Carrie Ossitee, you are a stranger.

CARRIE. I've had a time to find you, I have.

EV. Well, you've found me now, indeed you have. [*Shakes hands.*]

CAR. [*Looking around.*] What are you doing now? Do tell me, what are you doing now?

EV. I'm in business. I'm going to start an exchange. I've done a lot of thinking lately, and I believe an Exchange would pay; and as I had a lot of things around like that hatchet, jig-saw puzzle, princess dress, bird cage, etc., I thought I'd try it.

CAR. What a lovely idea!

EV. In these days a woman must have a specialty, indeed she must. There is plenty of room at the top, but that is the only place that there is any room at all. I've tried teaching, but children bother me so. And as for housekeeping, there's nothing in that. Then there's shorthand. I was learned that all right; and I could write fast, too; but I seemed slow like at reading it. Nursing? Well, nursing's all right, if sick people didn't want and

expect so much waiting on, indeed they do. As for clerking, shoppers ought to make up their minds before they come what they want and not decide and look around at everything after they get to the store. Of course, I tried running an apartment house, but what's the use of going into that.

CAR. But you can't run such a place alone. You'll need an assistant.

EV. Never you mind. I've got one. [*Confidentially.*] The other day I saw this "ad" in the paper: "An intelligent gentleman would like to go into partnership with a refined woman of business ability. Object, mutual prosperity and possible matrimony." Well, now that looked good to me and I answered it.

CAR. Oh, I'm so glad I came!

EV. Letters have passed between us enough to make him set up and take notice if he don't want to go ahead with it. Darwin! He'd better not try to back out. After all arrangements are made—

CAR. Oh my! This is grand! I'm so glad I came.

EV. And I don't see why it shouldn't be a good thing for both of us. He wants, he says, a gentle, affectionate woman; well, I am.

CAR. Goodness!

EV. I want a paying business and a husband. He says he's vivacious, whatever that is. Well, if he puts in his money and does the rest of the things I want, he can be vivacious or not, just as he pleases. I don't want my way in everything.

CAR. Don't you really?

EV. No, I don't, indeed I don't. There are two sides to a bargain. And I'll make no fuss if he isn't vivacious. He lays great stress on my being gentle and affectionate, says that's the kind he likes. Any woman can be gentle

and affectionate if there's anything in it for her, you know that?

CAR. Oh, my, yes.

EV. He ought to be here now. He sent me these signs yesterday. [*Goes to counter, takes up signs.*] I guess I'll tack them up. There, that's all right. When he comes, you'll have to git.

CAR. I'd like to see him mighty well, if you don't mind.

EV. But I do mind, indeed I do.

CAR. I believe you're afraid he won't come; that's the reason you don't want me to stay, you're afraid he won't come.

EV. He'll come, all right, indeed he will. [*Pause.*] Maybe a witness would be a good thing. Look here, you go back of the counter and stay hid, do you hear? Stay hid. Mind, no buttin' in, unless I call, or out you go.

CAR. All right. [*Goes behind counter.*]

EV. [*Reading sign.*] This is a good one, "Pay your," etc. *He* made up these signs.

CAR. Did he really?

EV. Yes, indeed he did. Hello, here comes somebody, now you hide.

[CARRIE *gets down. Enter* VIE VACIOUS.]

EV. Here you are. Well, [*Looking him over.*] you're smaller than I expected.

VI. Umm! You're larger. But I'm vivacious. Everybody that knows me will tell you I'm vivacious.

EV. All right. Darwin! I can't expect everything. I'm sure I'm pleased to meet you. [*Bows and shakes hands.*] Well, you wanted a gentle and affectionate woman, and now you see one. And I'll tell you another

thing, too, I'm quiet. I'll bet there isn't a woman living more—

VI. Umm! The quiet ones are dead.

EV. [*Sharply.*] What, what did you say?

VI. Nothing, nothing at all. I'm pleased to meet you. [*They sit down.*]

EV. Well, as I was saying, I'm fearful gentle, awful affectionate, and as all around quiet as you could get—by advertising, anyway. I tell you a man like you takes a risk when he advertises. He might get a—

VI. Umm! A lemon?

EV. No, an adventuress, or something like that. You're lucky to get in with me. You've some money, you said in your letters—how much?

VI. Umm! Well, about five hundred dollars.

EV. Is that all?

VI. Umm!

EV. Is that all? You certainly put a strain on my gentle affectionate quietness, by "umming" and pawing the air. Have you got your life insured? Every man owes it to every gentle, affectionate and quiet woman to get his life insured over and above his burial expenses. What are you insured for?

VI. [*Rising.*] Thanking you for your courtesy, fair lady, I don't think we can arrange a bargain, so I'll go.

CAR. [*Her head appears above counter.*] I'm so glad I came.

EV. Go! [*Screams.*] Go, well I guess you won't, indeed you won't. Sit down, sit down. [VI. *sits down.*] After putting a gentle, affectionate woman like me in this embarrassing position, you up and say you'll go. Well, you won't, indeed you won't. Don't you think I am a gentle, affectionate and quiet woman?

VI. You are, indeed you are. A gentler, more af-

fectionate and quieter woman, it has never been my lot to meet. But I don't think I am worthy of you. [*Rises.*]

Ev. [*Pulls him down.*] You're not, indeed you're not. But I don't expect it, indeed I don't. I'm gentle, dear knows; and I'm affectionate, as anybody can see; and so quiet, you can almost hear it; but I'm firm, Darwin! but I'm firm.

Vi. Yes, fair lady, but I'm afraid I'm not. I don't believe we could be happy together, and I don't ever want to make any woman unhappy. And I know I'm not firm. [*Rises.*]

Ev. [*Pulls him down.*] Don't let that ruffle you. I can be firm enough for two.

Vi. Well, I'll go back to the hotel and think it over and let you know. [*Rises.*]

Ev. [*Pulls him down.*] No, sir, no, you won't.

Car. [*Peeps over counter.*] I'm so glad I came.

Ev. If you leave this shop, I'll sue you for breach of promise. And I'll win, too, for I have a witness.

Vi. A witness! [*Looks around, but sees no one.*]

Car. [*Sotto voce.*] I'm so glad I came.

Ev. Yes, indeed I have. And after all your letters! You may think because I am so gentle, I can't get aroused; you may count on my being so affectionate, that I'll be too forgiving; you may build on my being so quiet, that I'll not voice my wrongs. But you're wrong. Didn't you ever hear of the fury of a gentle, affectionate and quiet woman scorned? You'll get sued for breach of promise, indeed you will. So just cool down and we will go into business together as we had arranged through your letters. You put in $500 and your insurance in my name in case you cause me any extra trouble. You put in the money and I'll put in the brains, and we'll run this Exchange business so that you'll have a little interest on

your money, a good home and me, a gentle, affectionate and quiet woman to live with; and I can have you and a few necessaries of life, such as an automobile and ermine furs. Now, don't you see that that's better than a breach of promise suit and your paying me alimony?

CAR. [*Her arms appear above counter; whispers.*] I'm so glad I came.

VI. Alimony? Umm! How could I pay you alimony when we are not married?

EV. No, indeed we're not; not yet, but soon. You can call it alimony, or costs, or reimbursement for leading me on and trifling with the affections of a gentle, affectionate and quiet woman. I don't care what you call it. But gentle, affectionate and quiet as I am, when I am scorned, I'm a fury. You may not believe it.

VI. I believe it.

EV. But I am. So you settle down and fulfill your agreement. Here it is. [*Gets paper and ink.*] You sign here, go on, sign. [VI. *signs.*] Now, that is all right, Darwin! I thought you were trying to back out—and after all you'd written, too. [EV. *signs.*] Now, the next thing is to get married right away and get all these little affairs settled and then to the main business, The Universal Exchange. So I'll call up the minister and have him come over and marry us at once. [*Goes to 'phone.*] Hello, hello, is that you, Brother Marriem? I'm Mrs. Eva Exchange, and I want you to come over and marry me now. Hurry up, because I've just opened my exchange, and I haven't time to waste. What? Oh, you wouldn't call it waste time; but I do. Yes, yes, I have the license.

VI. Oh, I wish I were out of this. [*Goes toward door.*]

EV. Wait a moment. [*To* VI.] Here, none of that. I've got your letters and your signature to that paper. [*In phone.*] Yes, we're waiting very impatiently. [*Lis-*

tens.] What's that? Well, *he's* waiting impatiently. [*To* VI.] You know you are very impatient. [*In phone.*] In fifteen minutes, then all right, good-bye. [*To* VI.] How do you think the signs look? I don't mind telling you I think they're pretty neat. I do believe you're smarter than you look, indeed I do. I hope so, anyway. Why, who's this?

[*Enter* MR. SHIWIFE *and* MAG.]

SHI. Good morning, madam and gent, can you help me out of my dilemma?

EV. What is your dilemma?

SHI. Well, madam and gent, mine is a particular dilemma, a delicate dilemma, a most important dilemma. Madam and gent, you see before you one who needs help. [*Gets handkerchief and weeps.*]

MAG. Don't cry, Pop, you look silly.

VI. What is the nature of your trouble?

SHI. My trouble, madam and gent, is my dilemma.

EV. Look here, we've no time to waste. What do you want?

SHI. Madam and gent, I want a wife!

EV. AND VI. A wife!

VI. I think I can help you out.

EV. You!

VI. Yes, I know where you can get a gentle, affectionate and quiet woman at greatly reduced rates.

EV. What!

SHI. That, madam and gent, is what I want, a gentle and affectionate and quiet woman. Tell me where is such a jewel to be found. Such a combination of virtues, I did not know existed in this vale of tears. [*Wipes eyes.*] My little daughter wants another parent.

MAG. No, I don't, Pop. One parent is enough for me.

SHI. You see, madam and gent, how undisciplined this flower of nature is.

MAG. No, I'm not, Pop.

EV. Well, you are a little early. [*Looks at shelf.*] We're out of wives just now. Tomorrow we expect some in. You're a day ahead of time.

SHI. That is not, madam and gent, my usual reputation.

EV. No, I believe you, indeed I do.

VI. But, really, I think we ought to help this gentleman out. I will put aside my own feelings, I will swallow my own disappointment, and come to his help. My brother's need is greater than mine. Umm! The brotherhood of man! Could I do more? I will give him my best treasure, my estimable wife. Yes, I will give up the gentle, affectionate and quiet woman who has promised to be mine. All this I will do for my brother. Take her, and may you both be happy!

EV. Well, I never, indeed I did not. Am I to have no voice in the matter?

SHI. [*Wipes eyes.*] This is too much, too much!

EV. I agree with you, indeed I do, entirely too much. And who are you, sir, [*To* VI.] to say what I will do? I tell you, man, as I told you before, I am no flirt. I have promised to marry you, and marry you I will.

MAG. *You* can't marry her, Pop, I won't let you.

VI. "Can't get away to marry you today, my child won't let me."

SHI. My dear, you must be gentle in speech as well as in manner. Your dear ma was gentle—

MAG. She was not, Pop, and you know it.

SHI. My dear little flower of nature!

MAG. Cut it out, Pop, you make me tired.

EV. Well, we'll excuse you, we have pressing business

on hand. We're running an exchange. An exchange to exchange everything. See the signs. Tomorrow you bring twenty-three cents and this flower of nature, or any other trifling thing you have on hand, [MAG *sticks out her tongue at* EV.] and you can get a wife or a Morris chair, or anything you like.

MAG. Come on, Pop, let's be going. Nothing doing here.

SHI. Perhaps, little flower of nature, you are right. We will go. No, madam and gent, you cannot do business with us. Your aims are too low.

MAG. And besides, Pop, we haven't got twenty-three cents. [*Exit* SHI. *and Mag.*]

EV. Well, I must—

[*Enter* BRO. MARRIEM.]

BRO. Good morning, good morning, what have we here? A couple for Hymen's bonds? [VI. *looks frightened;* EV., *coy.*] And so you two young people—

VI. Umm! Young?

BRO. Are anxious to get married.

VI. Umm! Anxious?

EV. Yes, he was very impatient, indeed he was.

BRO. So you said over the phone. Well, the gentleman usually is the impatient one.

VI. Umm! In this case—

EV. Yes, it's true in this case, too, indeed it is.

BRO. Well, well, I suppose you are both of age, parents willing, not married to anybody else?

EV. No, indeed we're not.

VI. Umm!

BRO. Yes, yes, that's all right. Now, another matter, I'm the father of a large family and the husband of a large wife, she weighs over two hundred pounds, and that

makes me cautious. Yes, that's the reason I'm cautious. I, who, otherwise, would be very generous and open-hearted. Yes, I admit I'm cautious. Well, in the little matter of the fee, now what would you say—what would you be willing to do?

Ev. Well, we have a business here, The Universal Exchange. A great and growing business.

Vi. Umm!

Ev. Indeed it is, and you know in business rules must be observed. There is no use in having rules, unless rules are observed.

Bro. I should hope not.

Ev. No, indeed there is not. Why, who is this?

[*Enter* Bobby Babitrad, *carrying a baby.*]

Bob. Hello, missus; is this a trade place?

Ev. Yes, this is the Universal Exchange.

[Ev. *reads sign. All through the play,* Ev. *commences and* Vi. *finishes.*]

Bob. Yes, ma'am; but can you trade things here?

Ev. Everything and anything exchanged—

Vi. For anything and everything else.

Bob. Yes, ma'am; thank you, ma'am; but can you trade things here?

Ev. Yes; but what have you in that shawl?

Bob. Our baby.

All. Baby!

Bob. Yes, our baby. We don't need a baby at our house, and I heard our neighbors say my father couldn't afford to buy any more clothes and victuals; and as nobody wants it, I thought I'd trade it for somethin'. What have you got?

Ev. [*Taking baby.*] It's a fine baby; indeed it is. But what will your mother say?

Bob. [*Looking around.*] She won't care; likely she'll never miss it, we have so many. Gee! that hatchet is great, and sharp, too. I could chip a little off all the chairs and nobody 'd notice it.

Ev. Just listen to that boy!

Bob. Golly! I'd like that hatchet; but [*Glancing at baby*] it does seem as if I ought to get something for Mom. You see, the baby's not exactly mine—

Ev. No, indeed it is not. [*Puts baby on counter.*]

Bob. Perhaps I'd better get somethin' for Mom. She'd get over her mad quicker. Mom's all right, but she don't get over her mad very quick. It's hard on the men, Dad and me, at our house. Golly! catch on to that princess dress! I wonder if it will fit Mom. D'ye think it will?

Ev. Yes, I do; indeed I do. Anybody can wear a princess dress—they don't have to fit. Is your Ma large?

Bob B. Not so very,—she's larger than me and Dad, though. I guess she weighs about three hundred pounds. [*Holds up dress.*] What if it's too little?

Ev. She can easily make it bigger; indeed she can. Here, take it; and where's your money?

Bob B. [*Empties pockets and counts out money.*] All right. So long! [*Exit* Bob B. *with dress.*]

Vi. My dear Ev., what did you take the baby for? It will be more trouble than it is worth.

Ev. Business is business and rules are rules; indeed they are. Don't you think so, Bro. Marriem?

Bro. Well, well, sister; a baby is different; a baby, you know—

Car. I'm so glad I came.

Ev. Well, this goes to prove how much better a business head a woman has than a man. That boy paid me twenty-three cents, didn't he?

BRO. Yes, he did, sister.

EV. Well, how long do you think it will be before his mother comes after the baby?

VI. Umm! Not long.

EV. I should say not; no, indeed it won't. Well, before she gets her baby *she'll* pay me twenty-three cents; d'ye see?

VI. Umm! Not so bad.

EV. Of course, if I wanted to be mean I could charge her more. She'd likely be willing to pay anything to get the baby. But I won't charge any more; rules is rules. But I must say it don't seem as if we was getting married very fast. Come on, Bro. Marriem.

BRO. Well, as I was saying,—in the little matter of the fee?

EV. Oh, here comes another customer.

[*Enter* BESSIE RINGE.]

BESS. Say, is this an Exchange?

EV. Yes, it is; indeed it is.

BESS. Here, I have a ring. I want to exchange it.

EV. A ring! What kind of a ring?

BESS. Well, a certain gentleman gave me this ring; and, well—well, you see—

EV. Oh, hurry up. I have gentlemen and troubles of my own. [*To* VI.] By the way, did you get a ring?

VI. [*Quickly.*] No; I'll go out and get one. [*Goes toward door.*]

EV. [*Going after him.*] No, you don't; no, indeed you don't. *This* one will come in handy. Let's see it; anything wrong with it?

BESS. No; the ring's all right. I'm mad at him, so I don't want his ring any more. [*Looks at articles.*] Oh, those pumps are lovely!—what size are they?

Ev. Well, it's a queer thing about those pumps; indeed it is.

Vi. Umm!

Ev. Yes; they'll fit any foot; indeed they will.

Bess. Why, how can that be?

Ev. It's a new invention; just try them.

Bess. [*Sitting down on bench.*] Pardon me, and I'll try them on here.

Ev. No; indeed you won't; not here. Take them home and—and see if—

Bess. All right.

Ev. Twenty-three cents, please.

Bess. But perhaps they won't fit—

Ev. All right; bring them back again, and for twenty-three cents we'll exchange them. Our motto is to please. [*Holds out hand for money.*] Here—

Bess. Pardon me, but I don't— [*Hands money.*]

Ev. [*Pushing her toward door.*] That's all right. Good-by. [*Exit* Bess.]

Bro. Well, now, sister, do you think that is strictly—

Ev. Now, you look here; I asked you in here to marry us, not to preach. *You* run your business to suit yourself, and *we'll* run ours.

Car. I'm so glad I came.

Bro. All right, all right, sister; let's proceed with the ceremony; but in the little matter of fee, what do you say to—

Ev. Twenty-three cents is all that it's worth. Of course [*To* Vi.] if you feel that you are getting too much for your money—

Vi. Umm! Not at all.

Ev. You can pay extra. But if it comes out of the business, twenty-three cents is the amount. But who is this? This is a busy day.

[*Enter* Mrs. Tyred Mann.]

Mrs. Tyre. [*Calling to someone outside.*] You wait outside. Say, what all can you exchange here?

Ev. Everything and Anything exchanged—

Vi. For Anything and Everything else.

Mrs. Tyre. What? Anything and everything? I'll bet I can bring something you won't exchange.

Ev. Well, I'll tell you this. You can't bring a single, no, nor a married thing in here that I won't and can't exchange. What have you got?

Mrs. Tyre. I'm sure you'll be surprised when I tell you it's my husband.

Car. I'm so glad I came!

Ev. I'm not surprised; indeed I'm not. Lots of women want a change, and men, too, very likely. How old is he?

Mrs. Tyre. Thirty-five.

Ev. What's the matter with him? What do you want to exchange him for?

Mrs. Tyre. [*Looking around.*] I ought to get something pretty nice for a husband.—I tell you, he's a number one fellow.

Ev. What do you want to get rid of him for if he is such a superior article?

Mrs. Tyre. Well, I want a change. I'm tired of him.

Bro. Well, well; what are we coming to?

Ev. Well, what do you want. A postcard album?

Mrs. Tyre. [*Yells.*] A postcard album? For a husband? I should think there were lots of women would want a husband.

Ev. Darwin! Husbands are not so popular nowadays as they used to be. Girls are earning as much money as men in lots of cases; and then, too, they don't care for housekeeping.

MRS. TYRE. Well, I won't have the postcard album, anyway. I don't keep postcards—I don't take much stock in fads. I think there are better ways of employing one's time. Have you any jig-saw puzzles?

EV. Yes; there's one here with nine hundred and ninety-nine pieces; and I think that would be a fair trade; indeed I do.

MRS. TYRE. Yes; so do I. I'll take it.

EV. [*Hesitatingly.*] I suppose I am losing a little by the transaction, but I've made up my mind, in starting a new business and endeavoring to get a trade, to throw away a little money in advertising and poor bargains, just to get a start, you see. So you can let it go at that. No, don't thank me; it's all right. When will you bring him in?

MRS. TYRE. He's outside now. [*Goes to door and calls.*] Hubby, come in; I want you. [*Enter* MAN *with hat pulled down over his eyes.*]

EV. Oh, land! He looks as if he were drunk; indeed he does.

MRS. TYRE. He isn't; are you, Hubby. [HUBBY *shakes head, sits on bench.*]

EV. Twenty-three cents, please, and the jig-saw puzzle is yours.

MRS. TYRE. [*Hunting in pocket.*] Oh, I have no money. Give me twenty-three cents, Hubby. [HUBBY *hands money.*]

MRS. TYRE. [*To* EV.] Here you are! [EV. *takes money and gives puzzle.*]

MRS. TYRE. [*Waves to* HUBBY; HUBBY *waves back.*] Good-bye, Hubby. [*Exit* MRS. TYRE.]

EV. Come again; our aim is to please. [*To* BRO.] Come on; now, as I was saying, twenty-three cents is the amount.

BRO. That is a much smaller sum than I am accustomed to receive.

VI. Umm!

EV. Well, you agreed with me that rules are rules, didn't you?

BRO. Yes;—well; but there are such things as exceptions.

EV. Well, rules are rules, aren't they?

BRO. Yes; but,—oh, here comes another!

[*Enter* P. R. T. TICKETT.]

TICK. Excuse me, but do you make exchanges here?

EV. Yes; indeed we do. What have you got?

TICK. I've something pretty big,—something you don't often see.

VI. Let's see it now.

TICK. Excuse me; but not until I see what I can get for it. What have you?

EV. [*To* VI.] You show her what we have on hand.

VI. [*Showing articles.*] Here we have a picture, a vase, ring—

TICK. No; excuse *me*.

VI. No? Well, here are puffs, a postcard album—

TICK. Not for me;—I don't think you have much.

EV. You're pretty hard to please; indeed you are.

TICK. Excuse me; but I've got something first-class to trade.

CAR. I'm so glad I came!

VI. Here's a bird-cage, and a husband—

TICK. A husband!

EV. Now, I guess you won't say again we haven't a good stock on hand; indeed you won't.

TICK. [*Looking at* HUBBY.] Is he crazy?

EV. He's not crazy; indeed he is not. And as for you,

miss, I want you to know that this is a respectable place. Crazy!—I guess not. He's an exchange, that's what he is; though I'll admit he don't look like more than a *free transfer.*

TICK. Excuse me; but do you mean that somebody exchanged *him?* Well, I've often thought I'd like a husband!

EV. Well, he's a bargain; indeed he is.

TICK. All right. Here's what I have.

[*Puts down suitcase; all gather round.* CARRIE *leans over the counter.* TICK. *opens suitcase, takes out bag; opens bag, takes out purse; opens purse, takes out envelope; opens envelope, takes out* STRIP TICKET.]

ALL. A strip ticket!—six for a quarter!

CAR. I'm so glad I came!

BRO. This is a rare article, indeed.

EV. [*Snatching it.*] Yes, indeed it is.

[HUBBY *walks over and looks at it, then walks back and sits down again.*]

VI. My dear Ev., isn't the gentleman to have any voice in the matter?

EV. No, sir; no, indeed; he is not. This is my—our exchange, and not his. But, besides, I don't believe he cares; do you—do you? [HUBBY *shakes* "No."] Indeed he does not. [*To* TICK.] Get you twenty-three cents and he is yours.

TICK. [*Paying.*] Well, he comes high, but I must have him. Come along. [*Exit* TICK. *and* HUBBY.]

EV. Come again; our aim is to please. Well, now, Bro. Marriem, let's get it over. I'm glad I'm not superstitious; indeed, I am; for I've always heard it was bad luck to postpone a wedding. Well, well, brother, we're

ready at last. Marry us, and the twenty-three cents is all yours; otherwise—

BRO. Perhaps, under the circumstances—

EV. That's all right. Hurry up, Bro. Marriem; I don't want to do you,—a short ceremony for a short sum.

[*All go out* R.*; mumbling is heard.* CAR. *stands in sight, looking off* R.]

EV. [*Coming in.*] Here's your money. Good-by.

BRO. But, wait; I want to congratulate you; madam, you have a noble, vivacious husband.

EV. [*Bowing.*] He's vivacious enough for me; indeed he is.

BRO. Sir, you have a gentle, affectionate and quiet wife; I congratulate you, I envy you.

VI. Umm! Thanks, thanks.

EV. Now to business! Good-by.

BRO. I shall do myself the extreme pleasure of calling on you again soon.

EV. No; don't bother. We can send for you when we want you again. Good-by!

[*Exit* BRO.]

CAR. I'm so glad I came!

EV. Well, you're going, too; are you?

CAR. Oh, I can stay, if—

EV. No; you're right; you'd better go. And, look here; don't bother to come in again unless you've something to exchange. You see I'm going to be too busy to answer questions.—Who's this?

[*As* CAR. *goes out, enter* MR. COLLIARE.]

COL. Say, do you keep collars?

EV. Yes; we do; indeed we do.

Col. Well, give me one,—size 14.

Ev. No; young man, this is no store. What have you to exchange?

Col. Oh, give me a collar, and I'll pay for it. I'm in an awful fix. My laundry didn't come home, and I've simply got to have a collar. Here's a quarter. [*Grabs collar off shelf.*]

Ev. [*Snatching collar.*] No, sir; indeed you don't. This is an Exchange, and rules are rules. If you want a collar—and I should judge by your manner that you did—you'll have to give me an exchange. Exchanges made—

Vi. While you wait.

Col. Well, what?

Ev. That's for you to decide. How much is a collar worth to you?

Col. It's worth a good bit if I get it pretty soon; but if I have to wait all night until you get ready to give it to me, it's worth nothing.

Ev. Why don't you exchange your necktie?

Col. Woman, are you crazy? This is the only one I have.

Ev. Well, I must say you don't talk like a millionaire. Go home and get something. [Ev. *hangs up collar. Exit* Col. *in a hurry.*]

Ev. [*Sitting down.*] Here are all these signs, and they come in here and want to buy. Can't they read Pay your Premium—

Vi. And Pick your Purchase.

Col. [*Enters with oar.*] Here's an oar, the first thing I could find. I can't see what earthly use one oar will be to anybody; but give me the collar now, will you?

Ev. You're forgetting the twenty-three cents.

Col. Twenty-three cents,—what for?

Ev. You see the sign, Petty Premium—

VI. Of Paltry Twenty-three Cents.

COL. Pretty dear collar, this. [*Hands twenty-three cents.*] Keep the change; now give me the collar.

EV. Sure, I will. Young man, my advice to you is to save the other oar; some time you may want to replace that necktie. One necktie won't last you a lifetime,—you would hardly expect it to.

COL. I don't expect it to. I don't expect anything. I hardly expect to get that collar.

EV. [*Hands collar.*] Here it is. I don't know what you mean by not expecting to get it; indeed I don't.

COL. Oh, that's all right. Ta, ta, old lady; so long. [*Exits.*]

EV. [*Calling.*] Come again. Our aim is to please. "Old lady," indeed! Why, here comes another.

[*Enter* MARY WIDDO.]

MARY. I have a hat I want to exchange. It's pretty big, I know— [*Shows a large hat.*]

EV. Oh, we have 'em come in here bigger than that; indeed we do. Twenty-three cents, please!

MARY. What for?

[EV. *and* VI. *read signs.*]

MARY. Oh, all right. [*Hands money.*] Just so I get something for it.

EV. Here's your change. What do you want? A post-card album?

MARY. No, I don't. I want something better than that.

EV. How would you like a bird-cage?

MARY. I have no bird.

EV. Well, what of that? I didn't say anything about a bird. I was talking about a cage. The way people come in here and tell me so much about their private

affairs, Darwin! I'm not interested; indeed I'm not. What do I care for the gratuitous information that you've no bird. If I had the time to listen to you, I suppose you would tell me that you had no elephant. I tell you, I'm a busy woman; indeed I am. If you don't want the bird-cage, say so. Suppose you take this oar?

MARY. But I can't row, and it makes me sick to go on the water.

EV. There you go again! Did I ask you about your health? Or have I time to listen to an account of your accomplishments? It is a fine oar; indeed it is. I'll venture to say there are lots of people that have oars that can't row. You don't have to row with it,—your children can play with it.

MARY. But I haven't any children.

EV. There you go again! I'm no census-taker. I declare, I've no patience with you; indeed I have not. As I was saying, you could use it as a towel-rack, or a Maypole, or something else useful and necessary. Read *The Home Journal;* perhaps it will tell you how to make a hammock out of an oar. But take it or leave it—pretty soon. You have been here a half-hour, talking, talking till I'm tired of listening. Here's your oar,—take it, and don't block up the door for that child;—let her in. [*Pushes* MARY *out, enter* BEATRICE.]

EV. Hello, sissy; what d'ye want?

BEAT. I want some candy. Please give me that taffy-on-stick.

EV. This one here,—is that what you want?

BEAT. Yes, ma'am; here's the penny.

EV. No: I can't take money, it's against the rules of this establishment. This is an exchange, The Universal Exchange, sissy.

BEAT. Don't call me "sissy." My name's Beatrice Beulah Becky Barbara Belinda Buckingham. I don't like nicknames. I won't have my name shortened, and my mother won't have it, either. What is an Exchange?

EV. It's a store where you trade. Have you anything to trade, sissy?

BEAT. [*Stamping her foot.*] Don't call me "sissy"!—my name's Beatrice Beulah, etc.

EV. Well, Beatrice and all the rest, if you have something to give in exchange for the taffy, you can have it.

BEAT. I haven't a thing.

EV. All right. That settles it; indeed it does. [*Puts taffy away.*]

BEAT. [*Crying.*] I want the candy, I do. Here's my apron,—will that do?

VI. My dearest Ev., don't take that child's apron.

EV. [*To* VI.] Now, you look here— Rules are rules. —If this child wants the taffy— And you do, don't you?

BEAT. I must have the taffy,—I want it.

EV. Well, then, you must pay for it. She don't want the apron, and she does want the taffy. Now, sissy,—

BEAT. My name's Beatrice Beulah, etc., and I won't be called "sissy." [*Stamps foot, takes off apron.*]

EV. All right, all right. You are a sassy one; indeed you are. [*Takes apron and hangs it up.*] Where's your twenty-three cents?

BEAT. I haven't any twenty-three cents.

EV. Well, go home and get it, then.

BEAT. Give me my apron first.

EV. Certainly not. How do I know you'll come back?

BEAT. Well, give me the taffy, then.

EV. You must be crazy; indeed you must. Do you think I am running this exchange for pleasure? No, in-

deed I'm not. Go home and get your money and come back and I'll give you the taffy.

BEAT. I won't go home;—give me the taffy!

VI. Oh, give her the taffy.

EV. Yes, you,—you'd ruin the business; indeed you would. Here, you get out of here, sissy! [*Pushes her toward door.*]

BEAT. [*Going out.*] My name isn't "sissy," it's Beatrice, etc. And I'll tell my mother on you, I will, and she'll settle you. [*Exits.*]

VI. Umm! Really, I think—

EV. Well, I don't. I act, and it—

[*Enter* MRS. BABITRAD *and* BOBBY.]

MRS. B. Where's my baby? [*Yells.*] Give me my baby. What do I want with this old dress? [*Throws dress on floor.* EV. *hangs it up.*]

VI. Yes; you shall have the baby; it's all right.

EV. [*To* MRS. B.] Now, you must cool down; indeed you must. What did you bring to exchange for the ba—

MRS. B. Exchange! I'll have you run out of town. Exchange for my baby!

EV. Not so loud; this is no day nursery, but The Universal Exchange. You can't have the baby unless you exchange something.

BOB. [*Crying, and holding on to his mother.*] Oh, don't exchange me, Mom; don't exchange me!

VI. My dear Ev.— Umm! Perhaps you—

EV. Rules are rules—

MRS. B. [*Tearing off belt.*] Here, then; give me my baby!

EV. You wait a minute; indeed you will. Petty Premium of twenty-three cents.

[MRS. B. *throws quarter on floor, grabs baby off counter, runs out.*]

BOB. [*Going out.*] Oh, Mom, I'll never—

EV. Come again. Our aim is to please. I guess she don't want her change. We are doing a fine business; indeed we are. Now, by that last transaction we have made a princess dress, a belt, [*Hangs up belt*] and twice twenty-three cents. We certainly are doing well.

[*Enters* TICKETT *with* HUBBY.]

TICK. Excuse me, but this fellow is awful. No wedding bells for me.

EV. Twenty-three cents, please. Owing to the small--

VI. —rate of premium no guarantee will be given.

TICK. [*Paying.*] Where's my strip ticket?

EV. That's our affair. What do you want to exchange for this? [*Points to* HUBBY.]

TICK. Oh, nothing. No more bargains for me. [*Exits.*]

EV. Come again. Our aim is to please. I suppose all people in business have stock on hand that is hard to get rid of, and we can't expect—

[*Enter* MRS. TYRED MANN.]

MRS. TYRE. Is Hubby still here. [HUBBY *waves hand.*] Here you are,—that's good! Say, [*To* EV.] I can't get this puzzle together—there must be some pieces gone. And, anyway, I'd rather have my husband. Will you come home, Hubby?

[HUBBY *shakes "Yes."*]

EV. Twenty-three cents, please.

MRS. TYRE. Oh, dear; I haven't a cent, and neither has Hubby,—have you?

[HUBBY *shakes "No."*]

MRS. TYRE. Take your old puzzle and give me my husband. Come on, Hubby.

EV. [*Puts puzzle on shelf.*] No, you don't. Pay your premium—

VI. —and pick your purchase.

MRS. TYRE. But I have no twenty-three cents.

EV. Well, then, you can't have him.

VI. Umm! My dear EV., in these early days of our wedded bliss, don't let us part husband and wife.

EV. Now, don't you get so vivacious. Rules are rules.

MRS. TYRE. Oh, what shall I do? What shall I do?

EV. Do,—I know what you can do; indeed I do. You can get out of here. You don't know what you want.

MRS. TYRE. Yes, I do. I want my husband.

EV. Well, give me twenty-three cents, then. You can't have him or any other exchange without twenty-three cents, so you'd better go.

MRS. TYRE. I won't go without him. I'll stay here.

VI. Madam, I'm very sorry for you. Perhaps you will allow me to—

EV. No, you don't; indeed you don't. Mrs. Mann understood all about the twenty-three cents. Why, she is an old customer of ours. She ought to have brought the money with her.

[*Enter* BESSIE RINGE.]

BESS. [*Throwing pumps on counter.*] I can't wear these shoes.

EV. Well, what if you can't? Can I help it? Can my vivacious husband help it?

BESS. You *sold* them to me.

Ev. I did; indeed I did. Well, you *bought* them from me.

Bess. I can't get them on, and I want my ring back. [*Cries.*]

Vi. Don't cry, my dear lady,—

Ev. Oh, let her cry; you can't expect everybody to be as vivacious as you—

[*Enter* Colliare.]

Col. Say, you old grafter, you gave me a No. 19 collar.

Ev. [*To* Vi.] Will you stand here and hear him call me names?

Vi. Sir, I challenge you!

Col. [*To* Vi.] Oh, you go and sit down. When I fight, I'll tackle somebody near my own size, like your fair lady here.

Bess. They treated me mean, too!

Mrs. Tyre. And me, too, and my Hubby!

Bess. They took my ring!

Col. [*Looking at Bess.*] Is that you, Bessie Ringe?—what are you doing here?

Bess. I suppose you'll never forgive me! [*Cries.*]

Col. Oh, yes, I will. What's up?

Bess. They have my ring!

Mrs. Tyre. And my husband!

Bess. Look,—she's got it on her finger now!

Col. Is *that* where it is? Say, you, [*To* Ev.] look here—

Ev. Now, you young man, I'll tell you this,—if you don't want my husband to put you out—

Col. He put me out!

Vi. Sir, you madden me!

Ev. [*To* Vi.] Now, you mustn't get excited; indeed, you mustn't. I'll put him out myself.

Col. Now you're talking!

Ev. Yes, I will; indeed, I will. And now it's nearly time to close for the day,—and I am tired. Darwin! But I am tired. Give me the collar and take the ring. [*Takes ring off.*] I guess I'll be married just as much without it.— Twenty-three cents, please.

Col. You old grafter!

Vi. Sir, you're no gentleman.

Col. Neither is your wife. [*Gives twenty-three cents.*]

Vi. Sir, permit me to say, we don't desire your company.

Col. All right. It's mutual. Come along, Bess.

Mrs. Tyre. [*Coming toward* Col.] Oh, I do hope you will excuse me, but could you lend me twenty-three cents?

Col. Are you in a fix, too?

Tyre. Yes, I am;—do you see that fine-looking gentleman over there?

Col. Do you mean that on the bench?

Mrs. Tyre. Yes. Well, he's my better half.

Col. He don't look it. [*Bows.*]

Mrs. Tyre. Oh, thank you; you are certainly charming! Where do you live? Are you an exchange? [Hubby *rises, comes over and makes gestures of displeasure.*] All right, Hubby; I won't.

Col. Not on your life; I am no exchange. [*Laughs.*]

Bess. Well, I think not.

Ev. No, indeed; he is not. [*To* Col.] You see, this miserable woman wants her husband back after she has exchanged him for a jig-saw puzzle; but she hasn't the Petty Premium of—

Vi. —Paltry Twenty-three Cents.

Ev. People come in here and try to work on my sympathies, and I just can't let my warm and generous heart have full sway. I'm too gentle, affectionate and quiet for this business.

Vi. Umm! Very true.

Ev. So I just have to be hard, or pretend to be hard.

Col. Oh, you put up a good bluff, all right.

Mrs. Tyre. [*To* Col.] If you would be so kind as to—

Col. Sure, I will. Here's another quarter, you old grafter. Now, go quick. [*To* Mrs. Tyre. *and* Hubby, *who exit.*]

Vi. Sir, I will be compelled to throw you through the door.

Col. My life isn't safe here, I can see that. Come on, Bess.

Bess. But my pumps?

Col. Oh, give her your old pumps. They're too big for you, anyway.

Bess. I won't give her the pumps for nothing.

Ev. No, indeed you won't. Twenty-three cents is what you will give. Owing to the small—

Vi. —rate of premium no guarantee will be given.

Bess. But what do I get for them? [Vi. *shows articles.*]

Col. Where's my oar?

[*Enter* Mary Widdo.]

Mary. I can't find anything in *The Home Journal* about making a hammock out of an oar. Give me my hat. [*Grabs hat.*]

Col. Give me my oar. [*Grabs oar;* Col. *and* Bess *run out.*]

Ev. [*To* Mary.] Twenty-three cents, please.

MARY. Twenty-three nothing! [*Runs out.*]

VI. My dear Ev., shall I go after them and bring them back?

EV. [*Wearily.*] Oh, no; let them go. We did pretty well with them, anyway. Darwin! but I'm tired.

[*Enter* BEATRICE.]

BEAT. My mother says if you don't give me back my apron she'll come over and put you both out of business!

EV. Oh, put that child out,—she gets on my nerve! I haven't the strength to argue with her.

VI. Go home now, and come back tomorrow, sissy.

BEAT. You shan't call me "sissy,"—my name's Beatrice Beulah, etc.

EV. Oh, put her out.

BEAT. I won't be put out! My mother— [VI. *puts her out, gently.*]

EV. Well, we'll make it pay; indeed we will.

VI. Yes, my dear Ev., we will. Thanks to your business ability!

EV. Your being vivacious helped, too; indeed it did.

VI. Well, there did appear to be a little dissatisfaction, and—

EV. Oh, did you think so? I didn't notice it; indeed I did not. I thought everybody was delighted. You go now and get the things ready for breakfast—

VI. But I really—

EV. Oh, that's all right. You make a cup of coffee, and call me when it's ready.

VI. But I really don't—

EV. That's all right; go on! Darwin! but this has been a busy day. A good day's work, and everybody so pleased, too! Our aim is to please. Nobody seemed to

think Petty Premium of Paltry Twenty-three Cents was too much, either.

VI. [*From outside.*] Is a gentle, affectionate and quiet woman ready for her coffee?

EV. Yes; I'm coming. Well, I'm glad everybody was satisfied. Our aim is to please.

[*Curtain, or exit.*]

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